

Statement on World Refugee Day

June 20, 2022

Today, on World Refugee Day, I join people around the world in recognizing the strength, resilience, and humanity of the millions of refugees forced to flee violence, persecution, and war. This is also a moment to honor the incredible generosity of host communities, the private sector, and State and local government across the United States who work tirelessly to welcome refugees and provide them with essential support. We also laud the bravery and dedication of humanitarian workers who show up, time and again, to provide lifesaving assistance in challenging and often hazardous conditions.

As a result of Russia's war against Ukraine, we recently reached a grim milestone: According to the U.N. Refugee Agency, more than 100 million people are now forcibly displaced, more than at any other time in history. On this day, we reaffirm our commitment to work with the international community to achieve sustainable, long-term solutions to support refugees, including through resettlement. We also recommit to engaging in diplomatic efforts to address the root causes of displacement and bring an end to the ongoing conflicts that drive refugees to seek safety across borders.

The United States will do our part to ensure that those who have sought refuge here have access to the lifesaving assistance they deserve, including health care and shelter, and opportunities to pursue livelihoods and education that allow them to rebuild their lives with dignity and hope for a brighter tomorrow. We will also continue to support vulnerable refugee populations such as women, children, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTQI+) persons, and persons with disabilities.

As Americans, protecting and welcoming refugees is part of who we are. Our Nation of immigrants was founded by individuals fleeing religious persecution. As we lead the world in responding to the needs of refugees, we honor our past, enhance our economic and social fabric, and exemplify our highest values. We do this because it's the right thing to do, but helping refugees is also good foreign policy, contributing to making the world more stable and secure, which benefits us all.

This is why the United States is the largest single provider of humanitarian assistance worldwide and why I raised our annual refugee admissions cap to 125,000 for Fiscal Year 2022. My administration is working as quickly as possible to rebuild the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program, to improve processing times, and to expand our domestic capacity to welcome refugees so that we are better positioned to reach this ambitious goal. We have already demonstrated, by welcoming more than 80,000 Afghans to our country over the past year, and by committing to provide temporary safe haven to tens of thousands of Ukrainians, that we will lead by example. Those who find refuge on our shores enrich our communities, as they always have, and bring a determined and entrepreneurial spirit that makes our country stronger.

Categories: Statements by the President : World Refugee Day.

Subjects: Afghanistan : U.S. evacuation of interpreters and service contractors; Foreign policy, U.S. : Diplomatic efforts, expansion; Foreign policy, U.S. : Humanitarian assistance programs; Holidays and special observances : World Refugee Day; Immigration and naturalization : Foreign nationals and refugees, U.S. admission policy; Immigration and naturalization : Refugees; Refugees and global migrants : Humanitarian situation; Russia : Ukraine, airstrikes and invasion; Ukraine : Refugees, humanitarian situation; Ukraine : Russian airstrikes and invasion.

DCPD Number: DCPD202200545.